CARES Plus – Round 2
Information Webinar Notes
March 19, 2013

CARES Plus – Round 2: Key Dates

- The CARES Plus RFA was released by First 5 California on March 7, 2013.
- March 26th is the date by which First 5 county commissions must submit their letter of intent (or LOI) indicating whether or not they will apply for CARES Plus – Round 2.
- In counties where a First 5 Commission has indicated it will NOT apply for CARES Plus, a Local Public Entity may apply on behalf of that county. April 3rd is the date by which those Local Public Entities must submit their LOIs.
- April 15th is the final date for submitting questions related to the CARES Plus – Round 2 RFA.
- By April 22nd, First 5 California will post the final set of RFA questions and answers.
- May 10th is the deadline for submitting applications for CARES Plus – Round 2.
- By June 17th, First 5 California will post the names of counties that will participate in CARES Plus – Round 2. We also will mail Local Area Agreements to county Lead Agencies.
- On July 1st, CARES Plus – Round 2 implementation will officially begin.

CARES Plus Program Information

In October 2012, the State Commission approved funding of up to $14 million a year for 3 years beginning in FY 2013-14 thru FY 2015-16, to support Round 2 of the CARES Plus program. As California expands efforts to improve the quality of early learning settings, CARES Plus continues to be the First 5 California Teacher Signature Program. It is intended to align with the Child Signature Program and Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge goals and funding.

<u>Key Features of CARES Plus Round 2</u>

From a programmatic perspective, there are relatively few major program changes between Round 1 and Round 2 of CARES Plus.

Similarities between Round 1 and Round 2

In Round 2, CARES Plus continues to focus on increasing the quality, effectiveness, and retention of early educators and continues many of the same features:

1. **Component A**: the research-based training opportunities approved by the Child Development Division
2. **Component B**: higher education opportunities leading to permit and degree attainment
3. **Component C**: professional development advising support for other CARES Plus participants
4. **Component D**: the state coaching program provides ongoing support and training using a one-on-one coaching model called *My Teaching Partner™,* part of the *CLASS™* system.
5. The **CORE**: includes the 3 online courses in English and Spanish***:***
   - *Introduction to the CLASS™*
   - *Looking at CLASSrooms™*
   - *Kids and Smoke Don't Mix…*
6. **Professional Growth Planning**: semi-annual meeting with a CARES Plus Advisor and development of a professional growth plan.

Round 2 enhancements

1. Every participant is required to complete a CARES Plus Participant Satisfaction Survey prior to receiving the stipend. This required survey is similar to the optional survey used in Round 1.
2. Annual dates have been established for the recruitment and application approval of local participants as well as for the submission of participant data needed to perform the CLASS™ observation and MTP™ selection processes. These dates will provide better program management and will ensure a fair representation of all participating counties in these selection processes.
3. Component D is available to any county that wishes to incorporate it into their local program; however, the maximum number of MTP participants remains at 500.
4. A minimum stipend amount for Component D has been established. The intent here is to equate the amount of the stipend to effort made, as well as provide an extra incentive for participants to complete biweekly MTP cycles. Lead Agencies may increase this stipend amount but they cannot decrease it.
5. The menu of Component A training has expanded and will continue to expand. In addition, First 5 is working with the California Department of Education's Child Development Division in an effort to align trainings with First 5 California's Child Signature Program (CSP) and Race to the Top. An approval process for adding new component A workshops is forthcoming.
6. Counties choosing to distribute camera kits and training materials directly to their participants may do so. Lead Agencies will be given camera kits and materials in advance so they can personally distribute them to participants during program orientation meetings, for example.

7. Round 2 fall and spring *CLASS*™ observations for randomly selected program participants will be performed as live observations, rather than by videotape. However, due to budget constraints, it is possible that <u>some</u> observations may still have to be done using videotape. MTP pre- and post-observations (for those participants in Component D) will continue as videotaped observations.
8. A revised evaluation and data collection process has been introduced. Tables of key dates and requirements can be found on RFA Pages 29 – 37. Additionally, a few new forms have been introduced and some are marked "Subject to IRB Review Process" and will be posted when final.

<u>Eligible Applicants for CARES Plus – Round 2 Funding</u>

First 5 county commissions have the "first right of refusal" for these funds. To establish its designation as the Lead Agency, the First 5 county commission must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) by **March 26, 2013**.

If a First 5 county commission chooses not to apply for funding, then a <u>Local Public Entity (LPE)</u> is eligible to apply as the Lead Agency for that county. An LPE, as defined in the RFA, is "*a county, city, district, public authority, public agency, & any other political subdivision or public corporation in the state, but does not include the State." (California Government Code, Section 940.4)*

An eligible LPE must be located within the county it wishes to serve, or within the region if several counties wish to join an LPE collaborative for CARES Plus. The LPE must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) to apply as Lead Agency by **April 3, 2013.**

Only one application will be accepted per county or region. If on April 3, 2013, more than one LPE from the same county submits an LOI, those entities will be asked to collaborate and decide among themselves which <u>one</u> will be the Lead Agency for the county or region. The deadline for submitting a single application is **April 11, 2013.** These dates can be found in Appendix N.

<u>Forms</u>

The Round 2 CARES Plus RFA application process includes several new forms. This change was designed to ensure consistency of information and to streamline the RFA review process. The forms use a letter code to indicate the form's intended user or purpose.

1. "<u>R</u>" forms are for use in the <u>R</u>FA application process;
2. "<u>P</u>" forms are <u>P</u>articipant application and certification forms, and director/owner authorization forms.
3. "<u>LA</u>" forms are for use by the <u>L</u>ead <u>A</u>gency to assist in managing the daily program operations.

Some forms are required and cannot be modified; this has been indicated on those forms for which this applies. Others are sample forms, and these can be modified for use at the local level. Please refer to page 49-50 in the RFA as a quick guide to these forms and their use.

"R" Forms and Application to CARES Plus – Round 2

Form R.4 is the new standardized application form to be used by all Lead Agencies new to CARES Plus. **Form R.5** is required of all returning CARES Plus Lead Agencies. Both the R.4 and R.5 are Word documents and the narrative boxes within the forms will expand, as needed. Both include a cover sheet and a standardized application with program prompts and question to be answered by the Lead Agency.

Although the RFA application process is similar for both new and returning Lead Agencies, those counties that are new to CARES Plus are required to provide greater detail in the application (Form R.4) than those Lead Agencies returning from Round 1.

Returning Lead Agencies will explain on Form R.5 what has changed from Round 1 to Round 2.

Both new and returning Lead Agencies must also complete **Form R.6**, a fiscal year budget; **Form R.7**, a FY budget narrative form; and **Form R.8**, a form to list cash match partners and their respective contributions.

"P" Forms: Participant Forms

Form P.1 The Participant Application and Certification form is designed to capture the necessary data fields as defined in **Appendix D**. A Lead Agency may use its own application form/process as long as it captures all the necessary participant data required in Appendix D.

If a Lead Agency has an online application process, it still is required to obtain the participant's original signature using **Form P.1**, pages 2 and 3. Pages 2 and 3 may be separated into a single document, as needed.

All of the P forms (Participant forms) will be translated into Spanish, and they will be posted on First 5 California's CARES Plus Implementation webpage once they are available. The English versions of the forms are currently available.

CARE Plus – Round 2: Program Notes

Developing your Consortium

There are several steps that must be taken to design a local CARES Plus program. Once approved for funding, the Lead Agency must:

- Develop a consortium of partners that share common goals and objectives, such as dedication to professional development, teacher retention, and enhancing the quality of early care and education
- Avoid duplication of services
- Pool resources to maximize funding.

The local consortium assists in designing the Effectiveness and Access (E&A) plan. This plan is reviewed and updated annually; it is the basis for the program design.

Required Consortium Partners

The CARES Plus program model is predicated on the power of partnerships at all levels. The required consortium partners are:

- The local First 5 commission, even if the local First 5 commission is not the Lead Agency
- Institutions of higher education
- The local AB 212 initiative
- Local Child Care Planning Councils
- Resource and Referral Agencies

Other Consortium Partners

Other non-required partners might include: Head Start/Early Head Start, Community based organization, foundations, local business, and family child care associations to name a few.

It is the intent that the local consortium represents the community and its partners dedicated to enhancing teacher education, quality and child outcomes.

Developing the Effectiveness and Access (E&A) Plan

Each CARES Plus Lead Agency and its consortium work together develop an E&A Plan that is updated annually. This plan assists in designing and implementing CARES Plus at the local level.

All E&A plans must focus on improving the quality of professional development provided to early care educators. Each local program can design the types of services and supports that are provided to participants in their counties based on local needs and priorities.

There are four major elements that must be included in the plans:

- Integrate First 5 California's Principles on Equity to provide equal access and ensure cultural competency
- Establish Priority Zones based on low API scores, areas of low supply of child care. Included in this is also the development of outreach and recruitments strategies aimed at recruiting this targeted population.

- Offer support services to ensure participant success in all aspects of the program
- Work toward improving accessibility of higher education courses and to improve alignment between and across educational systems

Additional information may be found in the RFA beginning on page 12and in Appendix L, First 5 CA Principles on Equity.

Local CARES Plus Designs

Lead Agencies must decide what program Components to include in their local design choosing from the 4 program components outlined in the RFA. A local plan must include the CORE requirements and at least one of the following Components A, B or D. Component C is optional. Local design may include all four components. Lead Agencies will design their own stipend structures but we have set a minimum stipend structure for participants in Component D, *My Teaching Partner*^{TM}. Please refer to the RFA on page 17 for additional information.

Participant Annual Requirements

Lead Agencies must provide access to and assist participants in the completion of the CORE Requirements. The online CORE requirements are meant to be completed during a participant's first year of participation except for those participants that serve infants. It is anticipated that the CLASS tools designed for infant teachers will be available in FY 2014. Once available, the infant teachers will be required to complete the CORE. In the interim they must choose to participate in one of the locally chosen Components.

Once a participant has completed the CORE requirements, they do not have to complete them again during Round 2. Those participants who completed the CORE during Round 1 and continue to be enrolled in Round 2 will be considered to have met this requirement.

If a participant transfers into CARES Plus from another First 5 CA program i.e. CSP 1 and 2 they will not have to complete the CORE if these courses were completed less than 24 months prior to transfer into CARES Plus, proof of completion must be provided by the participant to the CARES Plus program.

In addition to the CORE Requirements, participants must complete a series of annual eligibility and program requirements. Lead Agencies need to verify that participants have completed their program requirements before they issue the stipend to the participant. Participants need to provide proof of completing each of the following CORE requirements: *Introduction to CLASS*, *Looking at CLASSrooms*, *Kids and Smoke Don't Mix …,* and the annual online participation survey, as well as all required documentation for each Component they completed (i.e., workshop certificates or transcripts).

Eligibility requirements for CARES Plus participants are outlined on page 8 of the RFA. At a minimum, participants must:

- Earn less than $60,000 gross annually.
- Complete pages 2-3 on Form P1 certifying they meet the eligibility requirements and understand their responsibilities and rights.
- Have worked in the ECE field at least nine months prior to enrollment to demonstrate their dedication and commitment to working with children.
- Currently work at least 15 hours per week serving children ages 0 – 5 in a licensed facility or program exempt from licensure.

Quality Performance Report (QPR) Requirements

In CARES Plus – Round 2, Lead Agencies have a responsibility to submit an annual Quality Performance Report (QPR) as part of CARES Plus program data and reporting requirements.

As in Round 1 of CARES Plus, the purpose of the QPR is to provide First 5 California with progress and final information about program implementation of lead agencies' local CARES Plus Effectiveness and Access (E&A) Plan. The annual QPR must be submitted on or before October 1 of each year using an online reporting tool provided by First 5 California.

Each CARES Plus Lead Agency will submit the QPR using the online tool in order to summarize local program implementation information, including:

- the program's local outreach activities
- local program implementation methods including participant services, trainings, and program activities
- local performance goals, targets, and outcomes
- local consortium tactics
- any local evaluation findings
- other pertinent information.

The initial Round 2 QPR report, which is due no later than October 1, 2014, is intended as a progress report on the first program year 2013-14. The second annual Round 2 QPR will be due no later than October 1, 2015, and the third year's QPR will be due by October 1, 2016.

Detailed information about the annual QPR is described in Section VI of the Round 2 RFA on pages 34-35. The QPR is also mentioned in the list of lead agency data responsibilities on page 29 and is included in the Program Glossary, which is Appendix F of the RFA. More information will be available about reporting using the QPR when it becomes available.

CARES Plus – Round 2: Fiscal Information

CARES Plus funding is intended for the professional development of teachers who have the responsibility for teaching our youngest kids. It is a county's fiduciary responsibility to spend it the way it was intended to be spent. Lead Agencies are the stewards of this funding, and it is important that they follow all fiscal accounting, reporting, and auditing requirements.

The RFA includes a Glossary of fiscal terms (Appendix E), which will help you along the way. There is also sample local area agreement with information to help you understand the kinds of things you are agreeing to ahead of time.

Supplement not Supplant

- Funding use is based on First 5 California's "Supplement not Supplant" statute. This means that it is illegal for Lead Agencies to use CARES Plus funds to pay for expenses that it would have paid for anyway, using other funding. See more about this directive on page 46 of the CARES Plus – Round 2 RFA.
- For example, if a Lead Agency already is operating a professional development program using other funding, it should be kept going, however, CARES Plus funding may not be used to pay for that professional development program.
- A Lead Agency may not use the funding for supervisors or administrators that would be employed if the county was not participating in CARES Plus. However, if administrators are hired for the sole purpose of overseeing the program, then that is permissible.

Dispute Resolution

- The Dispute Resolution process is described in the RFA beginning on page 41.
- If, for some reason, there is a disagreement between the Lead Agency and First 5 California, there is a Dispute Resolution process available.
- The RFA also includes a Termination clause. If First 5 California determines the agreement with a Lead Agency is not working out, First 5 California will provide that Lead Agency with a 30-day notice, pay it for expenses up to the notice date, then close out the agreement.

Financial Audit

- Each Lead Agency, as part of its annual audit by a third party, must have a financial audit of the CARES Plus program. The audit is due November 1st of each year. The audit must cover the spending of both state and county-matched funds.
- The entity that conducts the CARES Plus audit must be a third party and must follow the Government Auditing Standards.
- At the top of page 41 in the RFA, there is a website address that will link you to the Auditing Standards.
- Please maintain clear and legible records and retain them for at least 5 years after the end of the program.

Participant Protection: Information Practices Act

- A Lead Agency using state funding to implement this program makes it an "agent" of the state. Therefore, the Lead Agency is subject to the Information Practices Act. This Act protects information about CARES Plus participants from any unauthorized use and access, and allows participants to see what information will be collected on them.
- All information collected by a Lead Agency should be secure and steps should be taken so that the information does not fall into the wrong hands.
- Each participant must sign the P.1 Form, the Participant Application and Certification, that references the Information Practices Act.

Program Budget and Local Cash Match

- All the forms you will need to convey your program operations budget and to revise it, if need be, are included in the RFA and at http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/Help/caresplus.asp.
- The State will only reimburse a portion of a Lead Agency's expenditures according to the match ratio. Page 37 of the RFA includes the "up to" dollar amounts depending on the county's category (A, B, C, D, or E) and lists the corresponding required county match ratio.
    - Lead Agencies are encouraged to leverage federal funds, Proposition 10 revenue disbursements, and contributions from the county, city, and private foundations. These are a few examples and page 37 of the RFA provides more ideas for allowable match funding.
    - Local matching dollars must benefit the CARES Plus program <u>only</u>. The funds used as a cash match, as you will indicate on First 5 California forms, must be dedicated to benefit the CARES Plus program. A Lead Agency may not use the dollars in this match for other programs.
- Any time the match falls short, First 5 California funds will be reduced accordingly.
    - If a Lead Agency is spending only 80% of its budget or less, First 5 California will work with the county to modify the budget so that it aligns with the county's actual expenditures.
    - If a Lead Agency cannot show adequate match and the Lead Agencies is overpaid, First 5 California will request that the Lead Agency return the overpayment.

Allowable Expenditures

- A Lead Agency will be reimbursed for only actual and allowable costs, including support services, stipends, the required audits, management, and evaluation, for example.
- A Lead Agency will not be reimbursed for food, promotional items, advertising, paying unrelated debt, any kind of entertainment, capital expenditures, fundraising of any kind, anything for the personal use by employees, empty facilities, political lobbying, or prior or future year financial obligations.
- A Lead Agency is allowed to spend a portion of the funding on administrative costs, but it can't spend more than 15%. Examples of administrative costs

include program planning, developing budgets, program-specific office equipment, and supplies, etc. Any cost that supports the management of the program is considered to be administrative, including indirect costs.

Expenditure Reporting and Budget Revision

- Lead Agencies must comply with all reporting requirements (fiscal and evaluation) in order to receive its state funding from CARES Plus.
- Lead Agencies will submit their expenditures to First 5 California twice a year – at the end of January and the end of July. First 5 California will consider adjusting this schedule for hardship on a case-by-case basis.
- The expenses reported on the semi-annual expenditure report must align with the Program Operation Budget approved with the Lead Agency's application.
- If the expenditure report and budget are not aligned, First 5 California will give the Lead Agency the opportunity to revise its budget.
- Lead Agencies must obtain First 5 California approval for budget revision prior to submitting a reimbursement request.

Carry Forward of Funds

- Funding from CARES Plus Round 1 cannot be carried over to Round 2.
- However, with approval from First 5 California, a Lead Agency can carry over funds between fiscal years within Round 2.

Program Changes

- While it is permissible to have major program change(s), First 5 California needs to know if the Lead Agency has any major program changes along the way.
- The Lead Agency must submit, in writing, major program changes, along with budget revision request, if applicable at least 60 days prior to making the change.
- A major program change might include:
    - Adding or deleting Components from the Effectiveness & Access Plan
    - Budget line item shifts greater than 15%
    - Any subcontractor changes
    - Major staffing changes

Program Evaluation and Data Collection

Information about CARES Plus Round 2 evaluation and data collection can be found in the CARES Plus – Round 2 RFA, Section 6, page 27, "Program Evaluation and Accountability."

The Conceptual Framework Logic Model in Appendix K depicts the program focus, program model, short-term objectives, and ultimate goals of the CARES Plus program. The guiding principles explain how the program is constructed.

CARES Plus Round 2 Evaluation Questions

The CARES Plus program evaluation is designed to address three primary questions:

1. Does training provided by CARES Plus improve teacher effectiveness in the classroom?
2. Do program participants consider training provided by CARES Plus to be useful for their work in Early Childhood Education?
3. Does training provided by CARES Plus improve retention of teachers working in Early Childhood Education?

Program evaluation findings, at the aggregate level, will be distributed to summarize the cumulative effects of CARES Plus training, education and coaching strategies. Findings will inform First 5 California's policy direction and funding decisions for future workforce initiatives.

Evaluation Methods

First 5 California will use CARES Plus program data to analyze the effectiveness of different professional development strategies.
Evaluation data may also be used for cost effectiveness analyses of each program strategy.

Data to address the three core evaluation questions will be collected by the following methods:

1. participant demographic and program information collected from enrollment through program completion, each fiscal year;
2. classroom observations coded with the *Classroom Assessment Scoring System*™ (*CLASS*™) to assess teacher effectiveness twice for selected participants, each fiscal year;
3. a CARES Plus Participant Survey each fiscal year where participants can assess the usefulness of CARES Plus training;
4. a post-program participant survey at some time following the program fiscal year. (This survey will be used in the future to capture information about teacher retention.)

Evaluation activities of the CARES Plus program receive oversight by the Committee for Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS), the state government institutional review board.

- Because CARES Plus is a government program, and not an academic research program, participants can be required to meet government participation requirements such as providing basic demographic data and participating in classroom observations. However, participants can control the use of their program evaluation data that might be potentially shared beyond First 5 by signing the Limitation of Data Sharing form. (Note, these three forms are pending approval by CPHS. For purposes of RFA publication, samples of these forms have been included.)

- It is the firm policy of First 5 California, and a requirement of CPHS, that data such as CLASS™ observations or other information may not be used for individual evaluation of teachers including personnel actions such as promotion, retention, or discipline. The purpose of CARES Plus evaluation is to assess the aggregate effects of public investment in early childhood teacher training. Lead Agencies must:
    - Ensure no misuse of data related to program participation or evaluation of the CARES Plus program.
    - Immediately notify First 5 California management in the event of any adverse event or unanticipated problem with regard to program participants as the result of program evaluation activities.
    - Meet data security requirements as described in the *CPHS Data Security Requirements.*

Data Submittal Deadlines

Data Submittal deadlines are found in Table B, page 31 of the RFA

- All CARES Plus Lead Agencies must collect, enter and maintain timely and accurate participant enrollment and program completion information using the CARES Plus data system. Since First 5 California has committed to implementing a new data system during 2013-14, only minimal changes will be made to the PRO0F system to allow limited enrollment data during this transition year.
- Following initial enrollment, Lead Agencies must update participant and program participation data by the last day of each calendar month. Key information to be updated is participant contact information and participant withdrawal from the program.
- By August 20 of each year, 100% of the total number of Component D (MTP) participants planned to be enrolled in each fiscal year must be entered in to the Data System with initial enrollment data completed. This deadline is necessary to enable MTP participants to receive the full benefits of the MTP program. It also allows the opportunity for participants that are not selected or eligible for MTP to be able to choose another component.
- By September 15th of each year, 80% of the total number of remaining participants must be entered into the Data System with initial enrollment data completed. (This requirement is to ensure adequate representation for the CLASS™ observation sample.)
- Due to the system transition for FY 2013-14 only a small subset of the application data will need to be entered into PRO0F for initial enrollment. The Program Participation status of “Save” should be used for initial enrollment data after entry into PRO0F.
- The remaining 20% of enrollments (including Component C) must have data entered by December 31st of each year. The final enrollment data must be completed for all active participants.
- Program completion data are due on July 31st following the program year as specified in Appendix D. This deadline replaces the October 1st deadline used during Round 1.

<u>Required Data Elements</u>

The required data elements and formats are listed in Appendix D.
The data elements table includes three columns that define the data submittal period for each data element: at initial enrollment, final enrollment and program completion

a. <u>Initial Enrollment</u> data elements include the basic data required to register a participant in the CARES Plus Program. Data entry for all MTP participants must be completed by August 20 of each year. Data entry for 80% of all other applicants enrolling in CORE, and all Components, must be completed by September 15 of each year.
b. <u>Final Enrollment</u> data elements include data required to fully enroll a participant in the CARES Plus Program. For final enrollment data entry, the remaining 20% of participants enrolled in CORE, and all Components, must be completed no later than December 31. Also, final enrollment data should be completed for all individuals who were registered during initial enrollment period.
c. <u>Program Completion</u> data elements include data required for program participation completion and are due by July 31, 2014, for fiscal year 2013-14 and thereafter.

Additional information about the data elements can be found in:

- the “Purpose” column defines the programmatic needs for the required data elements. Some data elements may be used for more than one purpose. D= Demographics, PI= Personal Information, C= Compliance, and O= Operations.
- The “Comments” column shows changes from Round 1, such as a change in the list of values. The comments column also includes the details for conditionally required fields.
    - Five (5) data elements that were required in Round 1 are now optional requirements in Round 2.
    - Thirty-seven (37) data elements from Round 1 have been removed altogether. Removal of these elements streamlines the data needed for program operations and evaluation.
    - Several data elements have been added to better support program operations and evaluation and are identified as “New Data Element”

<u>Data System Transition Plan</u>

Information about the Data System Transition Plan is found in Table C, page 32 of the RFA.

- The PRO0F data system will be used for initial enrollment data entry for FY 2013-14.
- First 5 California plans to implement a new CARES Plus Data System to replace the PRO0F data system during FY 2013-14, the Transition Year.
- The new system will better support the complex statewide operations of the CARES Plus program including enrollment, coach assignments, classroom observation sampling, CLASS™ observations, program completion, and

evaluation data. These program operations take place between the three lead agency data submittals (initial enrollment, final enrollment, program completion).

- As part of the data transition plan, during FY 2013-14, digital data files will be accepted from the five counties that provided them during CARES Plus Program Round 1: Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Riverside, and Santa Clara. No new counties can be accepted for digital data file transfer during FY 2013-14.
- Beginning in FY 2014-15, Lead Agencies must demonstrate their ability to meet formal CARES Plus data system interface requirements and be accepted by First 5 California for digital file transfers. Otherwise, the Lead Agency will be required to enter data into the CARES Plus data system.
- Formal interface requirements will be communicated to Lead Agencies by January 1, 2014. If formal file interface requirements have not been developed and released by First 5 California by January 1, 2014, the File Interface Approval Timeline may be extended into FY 2014-15.
- Once the requirements are developed and released, the five counties that have been providing digital data files will have six months to attempt and achieve a successful file validation test. If file validation tests fail, counties or lead agencies will be required to enter data using the CARES Plus data system.
- The CARES Plus Data System Digital File Interface Approval Timeline can be found on page 34 of the RFA.

<u>FY 2013-14 PRO0F Data Entry</u>

Information about the FY 2013-14 PRO0F Data Entry is found in Appendix D of the RFA

- This subset of data elements that are required to initially enroll a participant should be saved in "SAVE" status in the PRO0F data system.
- The initial enrollment data will need to be entered into the PRO0F system for Round 2, Year 1, FY 2013-14.
- Please note: Work facility information is not required for initial enrollment. In the new CARES Plus System we are planning to have a single list of facilities available for us when adding participant work history.

<u>Participant Application (P.1)</u>

The Participant Application (P.1) pages 4 through 8 include the data required for Initial and Final Enrollment.

- The Participant Application was designed to:
  - ensure that all required participant data necessary to determine eligibility is collected,
  - capture data elements necessary to support program management and evaluation, and
  - help identify whether the participant should already be in the CARES Plus Data System or not.
- The questions on the Participant Application were developed to align with the revised data requirements listed in the Data Elements (Appendix D).

- Some of the data elements that were previously required in PRO0F during Round 1 were not included on the Participant Application, and have been removed from Appendix D.
- The “Lead Agency Use Only” box (page 8) is for Lead Agencies to record the fiscal year as well as the participant’s approved components. Lead Agencies may also identify the participant’s advisor, and track the receipt of participant forms. Lead Agencies must record the Program Administrator that approved the Participant Application.
- Lead agencies are required to capture data related to completion of program requirements. First 5 California did not develop forms for capturing completion data because the forms and procedures may vary based on local procedures.
- All CARES Plus applications and supporting documentation must be kept on file by the Lead Agency in accordance with the audit requirements as articulated on page 45 of the RFA.